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UNCLAS VILNIUS 000121

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/NB, EUR/PGI, AND OES/IHA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [SOCI](#) [PGOV](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: FALSE ALARM: NO BIRD FLU IN LITHUANIA

1. Reports of a possible case of avian influenza in Lithuania's port city of Klaipeda have proved false. The Ministry of Health initially feared that the disease may have caused the death of an Indian sailor, who died on February 6 while his ship was docked in the Lithuanian port of Klaipeda. Egle Burbiene, Deputy Director of the National Center for Health Emergencies told us on February 7, however, that the preliminary diagnosis of the emergency medical response team was incorrect: the deceased Indian citizen died of natural causes other than avian influenza. The Ministry of Health has publicly retracted the initial diagnosis and may perform an autopsy to confirm the cause of the sailor's death.

2. There have been no cases of avian influenza, either in fowl or humans, to date in Lithuania.

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